

168

IMPROVING THE HOME-SCHOOL RELATIONS IN
THE RADCLIFFE COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTION	1
The Problem.	1
Statement of the problem	1
Importance of the study.	2
Need for the study	3
Limitations of the study	4
Sources of data.	5
Organization of the remainder of the	
Field Report	5
Definition of Terms Used	6
II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	7
Objectives of Home-School Relations.	7
Groups Involved in Home-School Relations	9
Students	9
Parents.	10
School Staff	10
Responsibility for Home-School Relations	11
Criteria for Good Home-School Relations.	12
Meeting Student Needs.	13
Student Participation	14
Staff Participation.	15
Principal Participation.	16
Parent Participation	18

CHAPTER	PAGE
Techniques and Media Used to Improve the	
Home-School Relations.	19
Parent-Teacher Conferences	20
Radio and Television	20
Newspapers	21
Student Publications	22
Exhibits, Excursions, and Observances. . .	22
Messages to Parents.	24
Miscellaneous Publications	24
Individual and Group Meetings.	25
Evaluating the Home-School Relations Program	26
Summary.	29
III. METHOD OF PROCEDURE.	30
The Problems Regarding Home-School Relations	
in the Radcliffe High School	30
First Questionnaire to Parents	31
Efforts to Improve Home-School Relations . .	33
Second Questionnaire to Parents	34
Evaluation of Efforts to Improve the Home-	
School Relations	35
Recommendations for Future Programs.	35
IV. PRESENTATION OF THE FINDINGS	36
Results of First Questionnaire	36

CHAPTER	PAGE
Efforts to Improve Home-School Relations	53
Parent-Teacher Association Programs. .	54
Parents' Handbook.	55
Reading Program.	56
Teacher Cooperation.	57
Orientation Program for Parents of	
Incoming Freshmen.	58
Weekly School Bulletin	59
Parent-Teacher Conferences	60
Student Council Project.	61
Results of Second Questionnaire.	62
Evaluation of Efforts to Improve Home-	
School Relations	68
V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS .	70
Summary.	70
Conclusions.	71
Recommendations.	73
BIBLIOGRAPHY	76

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The public school is believed by many people to be the foundation of a free society; and the survival of the public schools in America is determined by the degree to which the members of the community give their support in spirit and money. Therefore, the importance of good home-school relations cannot be overemphasized.

Education conceived as a cooperative venture entails responsibilities upon all those concerned in the educational process. As the administrators cannot get along without the cooperation of the teachers, neither can the school function well without the assistance of the home, nor the school or the home without the community. Each should be concerned with the functions and objective of the other.

The people of the community cannot be expected to work constructively for a more effective program unless they are informed of what it takes to make a good school. There must be a two-way communication between the home and school before understanding exists.

I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. The responsibility for

informing the parents of the many functions and procedures of the Radcliffe Community High School lies with the high school principal. The attitude of parents and students toward the school depends largely upon the effectiveness of the communications they have with the principal and faculty.

It was the purpose of this study to: (1) determine the present level of home-school relations, (2) determine the procedures that should be used to improve the home-school relations, (3) take steps to improve the home-school relations, (4) evaluate the efforts to improve the home-school relations, and (5) make conclusions and recommendations for further improvement of home-school relations in the Radcliffe Community High School.

Importance of the study. In this age of scientific, technical, and mechanical discoveries, it is necessary to make changes in the school curriculum, personnel, policies, etc., in order to make educational progress. Many of these problems that face each public school should be made clear to the parents and anyone else concerned with the school.

Bortner said this about the importance of public relations:

A school cannot avoid public relations. The community will acquaint itself with and express opinions about its school whether the school attempts to keep the people informed or not. Clearly, public relations is not a matter of choice. On the other hand, the school does have a choice: between unplanned or

planned public relations, between disregarding or developing an organized public relations program designed to promote a community understanding and support.¹

Need for the study. Through the media of radio, television, and newspapers, the people in all communities are told of many issues involving the schools throughout the nation; consequently, making the parents more aware of their own school. Informed people are more likely to be a thinking people. If they are made aware of a need for improvement in educational standards, they will more likely be willing to support measures taken to improve the situation. High standards for school personnel, improved classroom facilities, reorganization of school systems are all measures that have been taken to put education on its improved level.

Parnell quoted Walter Lippman as saying, "Often we act, not upon real facts, but on the basis of pictures in our heads." Parnell summarized his position by stating that home-school relations can be improved if the proper "picture in the head" of our schools can be established by

¹Doyle M. Bortner, "The High School's Responsibility for Public Relations," The Bulletin of National Association of Secondary School Principals, XLIV (September, 1960), 7.

the school administration and staff.¹ It is the job of the high school principal to see that the "pictures in the heads" of the parents regarding their high school are based upon fact.

The Radcliffe Community High School has had a rather unorganized and informal program of home-school relations. The writer feels it would be helpful to instigate a continuous and well planned program for improvement of the home-school relations so that the parents will have the proper comprehension of varying situations.

Limitations of the study. A questionnaire, sent to one hundred forty parents, was used as the foundation for the study. The purpose was to find the opinions and suggestions of the parents on issues relative to good home-school relations. Only eighty-four replies were received from the one hundred forty questionnaires sent to parents, or 60 per cent.

A second questionnaire was sent to the parents five months later. The purpose was to poll the parents as to their opinion of the success of efforts made to improve the home-school situation. Only forty-two, or 30 per cent of

¹Dale P. Parnell, "The Parent--A Part of the School Team," National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin, XLIV (September, 1960), 49.

the parents returned this questionnaire.

The suggestions, comments, and recommendations of the respondents may or may not represent the feeling of the majority of the community. It should also be noted that the material presented in this study has particular significance and pertinence to the Radcliffe Community High School and may not be applicable to other public school systems.

Sources of data. Information for this study was obtained from the following: (1) research on expert opinion in the area of home-school relations; (2) information from records in the office of the Superintendent of the Radcliffe Community School; (3) information from the school personnel of the Radcliffe Community High School; (4) information from the parents and students of the Radcliffe Community High School; (5) information from two questionnaires sent to the parents of Radcliffe Community High School students; and (6) information from educational publications.

Organization of the remainder of the field report. The second chapter is a review of the current literature on home-school relations including books, periodicals, and publications.

The third chapter describes the procedure used in an effort to improve the home-school situation.

The fourth chapter contains a report of the findings of the study and results of the project.

The fifth chapter is a summary of material presented in the preceding chapter along with conclusions and recommendations.

II. DEFINITION OF TERMS USED

Public relations. Public relations attempts to bring harmony of understanding and effort between the school personnel and the public it serves.

Home-school relations. Home-school relations is the program used to bring better understanding between parents and school personnel.

Educational program. The educational program of the school is a composite of all activities in which the student participates.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

A great deal of information has been written regarding school public relations, but very little has been written pertaining to home-school relations. Since home-school relations is a facet of school public relations, this review of the literature was mainly concerned with the methods of improving the home-school relations in the Radcliffe Community High School.

I. OBJECTIVES OF HOME-SCHOOL RELATIONS

The objectives of any home-school relations program must have the child as its focus, against the essential background of society's needs. These objectives which help strengthen the relationship between the home and school must be clearly understood by all parties concerned.

The Yearbook Commission of the American Association of School Administrators stated that one objective of home-school relations is, "a cooperative search for mutual understanding and an experience in effective teamwork." The committee further stated there must be understanding between the home and school before any constructive measures can be

exercised for the benefit of the child.¹

Another objective of home-school relations is joint planning. The Yearbook Commission of the American Association of School Administrators expressed the following in regard to joint planning for understanding:

Harmony of understanding at least in the case of school public relations, involves far more than "publicity" or "interpretation". It means genuine cooperation in planning and working for good schools, with the public giving as well as receiving ideas. It becomes a two-way community which provides the basis for mutual understanding and effective teamwork.

The situations which demand the attention of educators and laymen help to create and strengthen the interests of the people in their schools and give many opportunities and responsibilities. Each occasion for joint planning is a chance to improve the school program and to provide learning opportunities for boys and girls.²

In order for understanding and joint planning to be realized between the home and school, there must be a two-way communication between the two groups. Stearns pointed out that these channels of communication must be established in order to have both line segments interpret the aspirations and actions of the other properly. He also said that the responsibility of determining these channels of communication

¹American Association of School Administrators, Public Relations for America's Schools, Twenty-eighth yearbook (Washington: National Education Association, 1950), p. 14.

²American Association of School Administrators, op. cit. pp. 13-14.

the home and school lies with the school administrator.¹

All of the authorities agreed that the primary concern of both the home and school should be the needs of the child and society. Only through cooperation and understanding can these needs be fulfilled to the utmost.

II. GROUPS INVOLVED IN HOME-SCHOOL RELATIONS

The success of a home-school relations program depends upon the degree of involvement of several different groups of people. McCafferty said:

To improve relationships between school and community, many avenues are open and to be successful, four general groups of people must always be considered. These groups are the students themselves, their parents, the public at large, and the personnel of the school.²

Students. The home-school relations program is basically designed to meet the needs of the student. If the needs are not realized, a home-school relations program has not accomplished its objectives.

¹Harry L. Stearns, Community Relations and the Public Schools, (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1955), pp. 352-353.

²Carl L. McCafferty, "What Are Some Ways of Improving Relationships Between School and Community," The Bulletin of National Association of Secondary School Principals, XLIV (April, 1960), 114.

Bortner effectively pointed out that the student's influence is, "the most immediate, most constant, probably the most energetic, and certainly the most talkative link between school and community." He further stated that students are potential ambassadors of good or ill will.¹

Parents. Hymes believed that every parent recognizes education as an important rung on the ladder to success. He also believed that parents are ready to do whatever is needed to keep America high on the ladder of quality education.² Most parents are willing to help the school, but the high school principal must inform them of how they can help before any constructive measures can be accomplished.

School staff. Lake stated that the teacher is a natural communicator of the schools to the home. He also mentioned that problems of the home and school can be reduced if the teachers can see their unavoidable roles as important and influential representatives of their school system and of education in general.³ The attitude and

¹Doyle M. Bortner, Public Relations for Teachers (New York: Simmons-Boardman Publishing Corp., 1959), p. 12

²James L. Hymes, Jr., Effective Home-School Relations (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1953), pp. 35-36.

³Ernest G. Lake, "The School Staff--Each Member an Ambassador," The Bulletin of National Association of Secondary School Principals, XLIV (September, 1960), 39-41.

actions of teachers are judged by students and parents from within the classroom, and also, in their roles as citizens of the community.

Authorities agreed that the school administrator is responsible for initiating the home-school relations program. The Yearbook Commission of the American Association of School Administrators emphasized that the school administrator is in a highly specialized occupation which requires specific training and talents. He must know people and how to work with them. His leadership in promoting home-school relations determine the understanding and actions between the two groups.¹

III. RESPONSIBILITY FOR HOME-SCHOOL RELATIONS

Harral expressed belief that home-school relations cannot be delegated to one person, one school, or one group. He clarified this by saying that there must be some central authority, but the over-all program must be the responsibility of administrators, school board members, teachers, students, parents, and all others who are alert to the

¹American Association of School Administrators, The High School in a Changing World, Thirty-sixth Yearbook (Washington, D.C.: National Education Association, 1958), 138-139.

potentialities for building favorable public attitudes.¹

The school administrator is responsible for providing the leadership in a home-school relations program, but the cooperation of the entire group will determine the success of the project.

IV. CRITERIA FOR GOOD HOME-SCHOOL RELATIONS

Morphet, Johns, and Reller suggested the following criteria for organizing a home-school relations program:

1. Multi-directional communication is essential and must be both the basis of the program and one of its purposes.
2. A policy statement regarding school-community relations should be adopted by the board of education making clear the purposes of the program and the role of school personnel.
3. The program must be planned.
4. An effective program can only be designed with some clearly defined goals in mind.
5. Reporting is an essential element of the total program and needs to be developed in an effective manner with reference to the variety of groups to be reached.
6. Involvement of many citizens is desirable.
7. A wide variety of media should be employed.
8. The significance of the individual school in school-community relations should be recognized.
9. The central office should take responsibility for a few system-wide school-community relations activities and should concentrate its energies on the development of a staff for more effective participation in the work.
10. Responsibility for coordination and leadership in school-community relations should be fixed upon one person.

¹Stewart Harral, Tested Public Relations for Schools (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1952), 6.

11. Evaluation of the program and of its various aspects is of vital importance.¹

Meeting student needs. The Yearbook Commission of The American Association of School Administrators stressed that because of the student's strategic role as intermediary and interpreter, what he thinks and says about his school work and about his teachers, is extremely important. The commission also emphasized that the school and parents must meet the needs of the student in the classroom if the educational program is going to strengthen the individual,² community, state, and nation. The needs of the student in the classroom are: (1) effective teaching, (2) challenging work, and (3) individual attention. Meeting these needs of the student in the classroom is basic to maximum learning experience.

Other needs of the student involves: (1) proper counseling about personal and educational matters, (2) experiences in school activities, (3) providing a vital and

¹Edgar L. Morphet, Roe L. Johns, and Theodore L. Reller, Educational Administration (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1959), pp. 135-137.

²American Association of School Administrators, Public Relations for America's Schools, Twenty-eighth Yearbook (Washington: National Education Association, 1950), 59-60.

dynamic curriculum, and (4) directing the behavior of the student.¹

Everyone connected with the school should be interested in the future of the students. Meeting the needs of the student is necessary before any good home-school relations program can be effective.

Student participation. Since the student is an interpreter of the school program, it is important that there be ways in which he may effectively interpret the total learning processes through school activities.

Harral mentioned several ways in which a student could be an active agent for home-school relations, such as:

1. Participating in assemblies, sports, music, groups, publications, class organizations, and other activities.
2. Studying subjects and projects which show the relationship between the school and the community.
3. Participating in school-community programs with their parents.
4. Appearing on programs of civil, cultural, religious, and professional organization of the community.
5. Participating in field trips, excursions, and other school sponsored visits to places of interest in the community and in the region.
6. Writing editorials, news stories, feature stories, cartoons, and photographs in the student newspaper and yearbook.
7. Acting as guides and members of the greeting committee, not only on special occasions but also in day-to-day contacts as well.

¹Ibid., 61-63.

8. Designing posters, building exhibits, and making displays for use in stores and offices during the observance of American Education Week.¹

Everything possible should be done to enable a student to participate in those activities which will provide experiences to help him develop into a mature citizen. These experiences teach: (1) cooperation, (2) leadership, (3) citizenship, (4) service to school and community, and (5) scholarship. Through these learning experiences, the student also helps to strengthen the framework for an effective home-school relations program.

Staff participation. The school staff involves teachers, supervisors, custodians, bus drivers, secretaries, cafeteria managers, and any other employee of the school. Lake said the primary responsibility of the school staff is to be well aware of the impact of his individual actions, attitudes, and guidance responsibilities in the area of home-school relations. He felt teachers and all other employees should have an understanding of the following rules for effective home-school relations:

1. They should keep in mind that persons, not events, are of primary interest.

¹Harral, op. cit., p. 55.

2. Good public service and public relations equals success.
3. Good publicity is not the same as showing off.
4. Unity in interpretation of school policy is important.
5. Face-to-face relations are best.
6. Extracurricular activities have a tremendous impact
7. The written word helps to shape the school image.
8. Attitude is the key.¹

McCafferty listed some common courtesies the school staff should be constantly aware of:

1. Appropriate manner of speech and dress.
2. Good telephone etiquette practice at all times.
3. A welcome to be extended to school visitors.
4. Always express enthusiasm and loyalty for the school's program.²

The school staff has direct contact with the students, parents, and other people in the community; therefore, their attitude and actions reflect upon the total school program. All of the authorities made it clear that the school staff has many responsibilities for promoting good home-school relations.

Principal participation. Organized leadership for home-school relations provides the basis for successful home-school initiative in meeting the educational needs of children. The person responsible for the home-school

¹Lake, op. cit., 40-43.

²McCafferty, op. cit., 115.

relations program is the high school principal. Klavano, in describing the principal's role in home-school relations, expressed the belief that two very important responsibilities are to demand teaching excellence, and use media to tell¹ the story.

One of the most important ways a principal can participate in home-school relations program is by selecting a good staff of teachers. Classrooms should have an atmosphere of warmth and friendliness, and through the principal's leadership, this can be developed. If the classroom atmosphere is positive, the student will convey this warmth and friendliness to his parents and the program will gain² in stature.

Klavano was of the opinion that the use of various forms of media should be utilized by the high school principal. He explained that the support of newspapers, radio, and television helps a great deal in telling the story of³ education to the people.

Klavano also pointed out several things that the

¹Robert Klavano, "The Principal--Public Relations Leader," The Bulletin of National Association of Secondary School Principals, XLIV (September, 1960), 33.

²Ibid., 34.

³Ibid., 38.

principal can do to gain the confidence of the parents and community, such as: (1) belonging to community organizations, (2) inviting the parents and public to visit school, (3) sending written communications home to parents regarding important school items, and (4) being interested in the community needs and desires.¹

The high school principal should be in a favorable relationship with his staff, parents, students, and community. A favorable relationship between the principal and the above groups can exist if: (1) the principal will listen to suggestions and comments about the school from the groups; (2) the principal is sincere in the things he says to the groups; and (3) the principal analyzes and evaluates their suggestions and comments before taking any action. This relationship can be realized if the principal has provided the necessary leadership to instigate a good home-school relations program.

Parent participation. The parents want to know more about their school and they want to participate in the educational program. This fact is evident, but most parents are reluctant about giving suggestions and ideas to the

¹Ibid., 35-36.

school unless they are encouraged and informed by the principal and staff regarding the functions and operations of the school.

Parnell felt that parent participation in the home-school relations program should be in the form of: (1) active participation in the local Parent-Teacher Association; (2) visiting school; (3) attending school activities; (4) belonging to local service organizations; (5) giving constructive suggestions and ideas to the school administrator;¹ and (6) understanding the educational program of the school.

Most authorities agreed that most parents have a real interest in their child's education. The high school principal must provide the necessary leadership for promoting this interest through active participation in the educational program of the school.

V. TECHNIQUES AND MEDIA USED TO IMPROVE THE HOME-SCHOOL RELATIONS

The use of the various techniques and media in the area of home-school relations will convey the message of the school to all people concerned. Through these relationships, the total school program can be better understood and interpreted.

¹Parnell, op. cit., 50-53.

Parent-teacher conferences. The parent-teacher conference is one way of bringing the parents and teachers together for the benefit of the child. The National Education Association said, "The student likes the idea of his teacher and parents working together "for" him rather than at cross-purposes "against" him."¹

They also noted that all parents want to know the following things about the school:

1. The grading system.
2. Discipline policies.
3. How much emphasis is placed on the three R's.
4. What subjects their children will study.
5. Pertinent school rules and procedures.
6. How to help their child learn.²

Finally, the whole school benefits from successful teacher-parent conferences. The home-school relations value alone pays rich dividends. Many favorable things are said about a teacher, principal, a school, or a school system which the parents have come to understand.³

Radio and television. Commercial television and radio

¹National Education Association, Conference Time for Teachers and Parents (National School Public Relations Association, 1961), 5-6.

²Ibid., 10.

³Ibid., 6.

are becoming increasingly powerful devices to bring the school story to the communities in their listening and viewing areas. Jacobi noted that there are various types of programs on the topic of education which every parent should be interested in hearing and seeing.¹ Through the media of radio and television, many misunderstandings between the parents and school can be eliminated.

Newspapers. Because most people read the daily newspaper, it serves as an important medium in home-school relations. Regarding the role the newspaper plays in home-school relations, Stearns said, "The newspaper reflects and, at the same time, influences community sentiment as it disseminates information and comments on current affairs in editorial columns."²

Radcliffe does not print a daily newspaper, but the school does have a fine working relationship with the weekly Signal. The space available for school news is unlimited.

Whether the parents read a daily or weekly newspaper, or both, the high school principal and staff should utilize the opportunity to use the newspaper for better home-school relations.

¹Frederich Jacobi, "Radio and T.V.: Power Tools," National Education Association Journal, XLIX (February, 1960), 23.

²Stearns, op. cit., p. 266.

Student publications. Student publications in a high school have many advantageous effects on both the student and school. Presson noted that under the guidance of a specially trained adviser from the school, many worthwhile projects can be undertaken by the students. The purpose of student publications is: (1) to record what is going on in school life, (2) to reflect student body thinking, (3) to interpret the school scene, and (4) to publish the best of student writing. Some of the different types of publications may be the school newspaper, the yearbook, and the magazine.¹

Exhibits, excursions, and observances. In reference to exhibits, excursions, and observances, the Yearbook Commission of the American Association of School Administrators noted that student groups make many public appearances during the year. This contributes to the general public welfare as well as bettering home-school relations.²

Some of the student exhibits and demonstrations may include:

1. In-school exhibits, such as displays of student work in cases in the main hall

¹Hazel Presson, "School Publications," National Education Association Journal, XLX (December, 1961), 39-40.

²American Association of School Administrators, op. cit., 301.

2. Out-of-school exhibits in store windows which may include examples of student work as well as active participation by the student.
3. Portable exhibits, which may consist of mounted panels and arrangements prepared for loan to P.T.A. and other groups.
4. Live demonstrations by pupils, representing various departments of school.
5. Photographic exhibits.
6. Dramatizations and pageant, for presentation on school or community programs.¹

Another method of promoting better home-school relations is having the students go on school excursions to points of interest in the community. Many of the business, industrial, governmental, and professional people like to explain their work to the students. Also, these same people could be offered an invitation to address student groups on selected topics.² The involvement of many people in school functions is a means to better understanding of the educational program.

Student participation in community celebrations, festivals, and parades is another way to foster mutual understanding between the home and school. These occasions, as well as patriotic holidays, are excellent opportunities for mobilizing student talents and resources around community themes. The sharing of school talent with the community is important for the success of the home-school relations program.³ The

¹Ibid.,

²Ibid., 302.

³Ibid., 303.

school should be careful, though, as not to impose on the community too much. Often the school wants to be in too many community activities or the community places too many demands on the school for student participation.

Messages to parents. Messages of various kinds are sent periodically to parents. The Yearbook Commission of the Association of School Administrators said that each one of these messages is an opportunity to build favorable home-school relations. It is often necessary to communicate with parents by telephone or letter regarding the child's behavior or progress in school. Regardless of the type of message sent home, it should be characterized by the utmost courtesy.¹

Other types of materials used in home-school contacts are: (1) home-school bulletins, (2) reprints of articles, (3) registration forms, and (4) invitations to public affairs sponsored by the school.²

Miscellaneous publications. The need for school publications is increasing as school systems become larger and the educational program becomes more complicated. Ciernick mentioned that these publications may be done by the individual teacher and/or the administrator. She further stated that

¹Ibid., 292.

²Ibid., 292-293.

when the school interprets the curriculum, school policies, etc., through school publications to the parents, a better understanding of the school system results. A few of the examples of school publications are: (1) parents' handbook, (2) student's handbook, (3) curriculum brochures, (4) annual reports, and (5) newsletters.¹

Individual and group meetings. Stout and Langdon, in discussing individual and group meetings between the student, parents, teachers, and administrators, mentioned several different types of meetings that can benefit the student:

1. Freshmen orientation. The parents have an opportunity to discuss the high school courses with the teachers.
2. Vocational guidance. The parents, student, and counselor discuss the student's future plans.
3. General. Other reasons for a conference may be:
 - (1) a student needs help with his subject;
 - (2) the parents feel the school should know about a family problem which may affect the student's homework; and (3) the parents object to the amount of homework the student has to do.²

One of the most active home-school organizations is the Parent-Teacher Association. This organization can do a great

¹Sylvia Ciernick, "Getting More Mileage From School Publications," National Education Association Journal, XLIV, 25-26.

²Irving W. Stout and Grace Langdon, Parent-Teacher Relationships (Washington, D.C., National Education Association, 1958), 25-26.

deal toward creating better understanding between home and school. The National Congress of Parents and Teachers summarized the objective of the Parent-Teacher Association as follows:

1. To promote the welfare of children and youth in home, school, church, and community.
2. To raise the standards of home life.
3. To secure adequate laws for the care and protection of children and youth.
4. To bring into closer relation the home and the school, that parents and teachers may cooperate intelligently in the training of the child.
5. To develop between educators and the general public such united efforts as will secure for every child the highest advantages in physical, mental, social, and spiritual education.¹

The success of the various techniques and media of home-school relations is dependent upon the manner in which they are used. Simply using these methods of communication will not solve many problems. The high school principal has the responsibility of selecting and using the appropriate media and techniques for promoting good home-school relations in his school.

VI. EVALUATING THE HOME-SCHOOL RELATIONS PROGRAM

In order to determine the specific areas of home-

¹National Congress of Parents and Teachers, A Teacher's Guide to the P.T.A. (Chicago, Illinois: National Congress of Parents and Teachers, 1957), 2.

school relations in which a school is weak, there must be a method or methods employed to examine the program. The Commission of the American Association of School Administrators identified the following three ways of determining the problems of educational planning:

1. Survey. A survey is one means of defining the problems which merit the concern of school and home. It is an attempt, also, to learn the feelings and the attitudes of the group with respect to the current educational program.
2. Suggestions from Community Organizations. This method of identifying problems for educational planning may include the following groups: (1) the parent-teacher association, (2) the board of education, (3) the teachers organization, and (4) the student organizations.
3. The Open-Door Policy. In educational planning this means that, at least figuratively speaking, the administrator's door is always open, and that he welcomes suggestions, criticisms, and ideas coming from any member of the school staff or any individual in the community.¹

Hymes said that the proof of efforts to better the home-school relations is whether or not students' living is improved.

1. Do they have a richer, fuller, more nourishing life, in school and out, than would otherwise be open to them?
2. Do they have more consistent guidance in school and out, and, as a result, live more fully at the peak of their powers?²

Determining whether or not students' living has been

¹American Association of School Administrators, op. cit. 80-83.

²Hymes, op. cit., p. 225.

improved through a home-school relations program is dependent upon several factors previously mentioned in this review:

(1) meeting the needs of the student, (2) student participation, (3) parent participation, (4) school staff participation, and (5) administrative leadership--utilization of the various techniques and media in the area of home-school relations.

There are various methods used to evaluate the home-school relations program. Among these are surveys, opinion polls, checklists, and rating scales. One very good inventory poll technique was developed by Hand in determining attitudes on educational issues which need to be dealt with in the home-school relations program. Some of the specific areas on which Hand's inventory poll asks parent opinion are: (1) courses taught in school, (2) overall opinion of school, (3) whether or not the school does a good job of telling the parents about the work of the school, (4) how parents get information about the school, (5) things parents like and dislike about the school, and (6) suggestions for school improvement.¹

Evaluation of home-school relations is a necessary

¹H. C. Hand, What People Think About Their Schools (Yonkers: World Book Co., 1948), p. 219.

phase of the total program. It should be carefully planned with carefully selected personnel in charge.

VII. SUMMARY

Home-school relations is very important to the educational progress of the high school. When there is mutual understanding between the home and school, cooperation toward educational planning will result. Understanding and cooperation is often times the result of keeping people informed about the school program.

If the various techniques and media are selected and used properly, the home-school relations may be improved. These methods of telling the story of the school to all parties concerned helps create a more active interest in the school program.

The responsibility for initiating a home-school relations program rests with the high school principal, but the success of the program depends in part upon the participation of the students, parents, and school staff. Also, the home-school relations program must be continuous, and only through constant study and planning will it be successful.

Finally, the home-school relations program must be periodically evaluated, and revisions made that will benefit future programs.

CHAPTER III

METHOD OF PROCEDURE

Following a review of the literature to determine all phases of home-school relations, six major steps constituted the method of procedure: (1) the problems regarding home-school relations in the Radcliffe High School, (2) first questionnaire to parents, (3) efforts to improve home-school relations, (4) second questionnaire to parents, (5) evaluation of efforts to improve the home-school relations, and (6) recommendations for future programs.

I. THE PROBLEMS REGARDING HOME-SCHOOL RELATIONS IN THE RADCLIFFE HIGH SCHOOL

From a review of the literature, the writer attempted to identify those phases of home-school relations which needed improvement in the Radcliffe High School.

First, Radcliffe High School had not had an organized plan for effective home-school relations. Since the school staff, parents, and students are a part of the school, understanding and cooperation must exist between the groups if the educational program is to succeed.

Secondly, the parents had not been asked to make suggestions and comments about the school. The only comments

from parents were those that came when there was disciplinary trouble or some other problem involving their child.

Thirdly, the writer felt that the school staff should be more aware of their responsibilities as home-school relations ambassadors. The attitude and actions of the school staff are very important to the success of the entire school program.

Finally, the writer felt that his position warranted a favorable relationship with the above groups of people; consequently, it was decided that a well organized home-school relations program would help to foster better understanding between all parties.

II. FIRST QUESTIONNAIRE TO PARENTS

After a review of the literature and the home-school relations problems were identified involving the Radcliffe High School, it was determined that many of the answers to the writer's questions could be obtained by sending a questionnaire to the parents. From this questionnaire it was hoped that parents would express their opinion on different areas concerning the Radcliffe High School.

Many of the questions listed in the questionnaire

were from Hand's "Illinois Inventory of Parent Opinion."¹

Other questions were developed by the writer that pertained to specific phases of the Radcliffe High School in consultation with school administrators and his thesis advisor.

The questionnaire included questions pertaining to the following: (1) how information about the school was received, (2) amount of homework, (3) things the parents would like to see the school do more about, (4) Parent-Teacher Association meetings, (5) course offerings, (6) likes and dislikes of the school, and (7) over-all satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the school.

The purpose of this questionnaire was to: (1) determine the present opinions of parents regarding the home-school relations in the Radcliffe High School, and (2) make an effort to correct or improve those phases of home-school relations that the parents mentioned in the questionnaire.

This questionnaire was sent to the parents--one hundred forty--of all high school students in October of 1961. A second notice to return the questionnaire was put into the weekly bulletin approximately one week after the questionnaire was sent out. Eighty-four or 60 per cent

¹Hand, op. cit., pp. 163-167.

returns were received from this questionnaire.

The results of the questionnaire were compiled and analyzed. After a careful study of the replies and consultation with the superintendent of the Radcliffe Community School, the writer determined those areas which were felt to need special emphasis for improving the home-school relations in the Radcliffe High School.

III. EFFORTS TO IMPROVE HOME-SCHOOL RELATIONS

Although some attention was given to all phases of home-school relations, the writer made an effort to improve those areas which the parents felt needed special emphasis.

The phases of home-school relations that needed improvement, according to the parents' replies, were studied and the following efforts were used to improve them: (1) Parent-Teacher Association programs, (2) general school information, (3) reading program, (4) teacher cooperation, and (5) orientation program for parents of incoming freshmen.

Since the review of the literature dealt with all phases of home-school relations, it was decided to include more aspects of the problem into this study. Consequently, in addition to those areas which the parents felt needed improvement, the writer also attempted to improve the following phases of home-school relations: (1) weekly school

bulletin, (2) parent-teacher conferences, and (3) a student council project.

Some of the methods used to try to improve those areas of concern were: (1) faculty study groups, (2) written communications to parents, (3) discussion groups at Parent-Teacher Association meetings, (4) meetings with faculty and student council, (5) meeting with parents of incoming freshmen, (6) making speeches at Parent-Teacher Association meetings and local organizations, and (7) listening and studying the comments from parents, teachers, and students regarding phases of home-school relations in the Radcliffe High School.

All of these efforts to improve the home-school relations in the Radcliffe High School were dealt with during the 1961-62 school year.

IV. SECOND QUESTIONNAIRE TO PARENTS

After the program to improve the home-school relations had been completed, a final questionnaire was sent to the parents to obtain their opinions on the various actions taken to correct or improve the problems. This questionnaire was sent to the parents approximately five months after the first.

The return on this questionnaire was forty-two or 30 per cent of the total number sent out. A second notice was

sent on this questionnaire approximately one week after the first. Since the writer had already sent a questionnaire to the parents earlier in the year and the instrumental teacher had also sent one to the parents, this could be the reason for the low percentage of return.

The next step was to compile the data and analyze it for a basis of evaluating the home-school relations program for the 1961-62 school year.

V. EVALUATION OF EFFORTS TO IMPROVE THE HOME-SCHOOL RELATIONS

On the basis of the replies from parents on the second questionnaire, the writer's interpretation of the opinions, the school staff's comments, and the comments heard from parents and students, an evaluation of the effort to improve the home-school relations was made.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE PROGRAMS

Since there were comments made about various phases of home-school relations during the study, revisions were recommended for future programs. These changes that were recommended constituted the reactions of parents, school staff, and administrators of the Radcliffe High School toward the over-all home-school relations program.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION OF THE FINDINGS

The presentation of the findings included the following steps toward improving the home-school relations in the Radcliffe High School: (1) results of first questionnaire, (2) efforts to improve home-school relations, (3) results of second questionnaire, and (4) evaluation of efforts to improve home-school relations.

I. RESULTS OF FIRST QUESTIONNAIRE

The purpose of the first questionnaire was to obtain the parents' opinion as to the phases of home-school relations which they felt needed improvement.

The questions asked along with the number of responses and percentages follow, and a summarization pertaining to the results and comments for each individual question is also included:

1. How do you get information about your child's school?

	(Check one)	84 (Responses)
	<u>Number of Responses</u>	<u>Per Cent</u>
Visiting school	21	25
Going to P.T.A., parents' night, etc.	41	49

	(Check one)	84 (Responses)
	<u>Number of Responses</u>	<u>Per Cent</u>
Talking with other adults	41	49
Going to school games, plays, etc.	39	46
Reading the school newspaper, yearbooks, etc.	66	79
Reading the city newspaper	66	79
Helping pupils with homework	45	54
Hearing talks about school at club meetings	7	8
Weekly school bulletin	71	85
Parent-teacher conferences	77	92

2. In general, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way your child is treated by the teachers and other school officials in his school?

	(Check one)	84 (Responses)
	<u>Number of Responses</u>	<u>Per Cent</u>
Very well satisfied	22	27
Satisfied	51	61
Half and Half	7	8
Very much dissatisfied	3	3
I have no opinion	1	1

If you are dissatisfied with the way your child is treated, tell what things are done that you don't like. _____

3. In general, does your child have too much or too little work in order to "keep up" in his studies?

(Check one) 83
(Responses)

	<u>Number of Responses</u>	<u>Per Cent</u>
Much too much	3	4
Too much	11	13
About the right amount	66	79
Much too little	0	0
Too little	0	0
I have no opinion	3	4

4. Are there things that your child should be learning right now which are not being taught in his school?

(Check one) 69
(Responses)

	<u>Number of Responses</u>	<u>Per Cent</u>
No, none	36	52
Yes, many things	5	7
I have no opinion	28	41

If there are things that you think your child should be learning which are not being taught in his school, tell what these things are. _____

5. In general, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the school which your child is attending?

(Check one) 81
(Responses)

	<u>Number of Responses</u>	<u>Per Cent</u>
Very well satisfied	22	27
Satisfied	53	65
About half and half	6	8
Dissatisfied	0	0
Very much dissatisfied	0	0
I have no opinion	0	0

If you have suggestions, please write them here. _____.

6. Do you know as much about the school as you would like to know?

	(Check one)	78 (Responses)
	<u>Number of Responses</u>	<u>Per Cent</u>
Yes	32	41
No	24	31
Uncertain	22	28

7. What is the one thing you like most about your child's school? _____

46
(Responses)

8. What is the one thing you most dislike about your child's school? _____

33
(Responses)

9. Do you favor the "individual achievement" grade which is on the report card?

	(Check one)	81 (Responses)
	<u>Number of Responses</u>	<u>Per Cent</u>
Yes	67	83
No	3	4
Uncertain	11	13

10. Which, if any, of the following things would you like to see the high school do more about? (Check all that you would like to see more done about).

		84 (Responses)
	<u>Number of Responses</u>	<u>Per Cent</u>
More emphasis on teaching children to get along with others	27	32

	<u>Number of Responses</u>	<u>Per Cent</u>
More chances for all children to learn sports and recreational activities	19	23
More attention to the problems of family life	17	20
More attention to the problems of city, state, and national government	17	20
More study of the methods of communications	6	7
More study of how to use money wisely	35	42
More attention to reading	39	46
More attention to mathematics	13	15
More attention to public and social speaking	27	32
More study by the teachers of the abilities, aptitudes, and interests of all children as a basis for helping them choose and prepare for their life work	60	71
More art education	3	4
More music education	5	6
Other (tell what) _____	7	8

11. Do you feel that parent-teacher conferences are helpful for all concerned?

	(Check one)	78 (Responses)
	<u>Number of Responses</u>	<u>Per Cent</u>
Always or nearly always	42	54
Usually	29	37
About half the time	6	8
Seldom	1	1
Almost never	0	0

12. Do you feel that the P.T.A. programs have been beneficial to you in understanding the school's work?

	(Check one)	74 (Responses)
	<u>Number of Responses</u>	<u>Per Cent</u>
Yes	40	54
No	11	15
Uncertain	23	31

If you say "No", please state the reasons. _____

13. How often do you attend P.T.A. meetings?

	(Check one)	80 (Responses)
	<u>Number of Responses</u>	<u>Per Cent</u>
Always or nearly always	10	13
Usually	18	23
About half the time	21	26
Almost never	10	13
Seldom	21	26

If you attend less than half the meetings, please state the reasons. _____

14. Do you feel that you are informed enough about the course offerings in school?

	(Check one)	78 (Responses)
	<u>Number of Responses</u>	<u>Per Cent</u>
Yes	49	63
No	29	37

1. Do you feel that your child's school does a good job or a poor job of telling you about the work of the school?

	(Check one)	83 (Respondents)
	<u>Number of Responses</u>	<u>Per Cent of Respondents</u>
Very good	15	18
Good	54	65
Fair	13	16
Poor	1	1
I have no opinion	0	0

The results from question number one shows the majority of respondents, sixty-nine, or 83 per cent, felt the school did a good to a very good job of telling about the school's work. This was in sharp contrast to the one per cent who felt the school did a poor job.

2. How do you get information about your child's school?

	(Check all needed)	84 (Respondents)
	<u>Number of Responses</u>	<u>Per Cent</u>
Visiting school	21	25
Going to P.T.A., parents' night, etc.	41	49
Talking with other adults	41	49
Going to school games, plays, etc.	39	46
Reading the school news- paper, yearbooks, etc.	66	79

	<u>Number of Responses</u>	<u>Per Cent</u>
Reading the city newspaper	66	79
Helping pupils with homework	45	54
Hearing talks about school at club meetings	7	8
Weekly school bulletin	71	85
Parent-teacher conferences	77	92

Although the writer neglected to include the child as a source of information about the school, one must assume that some information is carried by the student. Four ways in which they received information about the school were checked by majorities of the parents. These four were as follows: (1) parent-teacher conferences, (2) the weekly school bulletin, (3) reading the school newspaper, yearbooks, etc., and (4) the city newspaper. It should be noted that only twenty-one, or 25 per cent gained information from school visits.

3. In general, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way your child is treated by the teachers and other school officials in his school?

	(Check one)	84 (Respondents)
	<u>Number of Responses</u>	<u>Per Cent of Respondents</u>
Very well satisfied	22	26
Satisfied	51	61
Half and half	7	8
Very much dissatisfied	3	4
I have no opinion	1	1

If you are dissatisfied with the way your child is treated, tell what things are done that you don't like. _____

Sixty-one per cent, the highest percentage, were satisfied and 26 per cent were very well satisfied with the way their child was treated by the school. Those expressing dissatisfaction listed the following as reasons: (1) not enough explanation about assignments, (2) more individual attention and encouragement, (3) management of departments and availability of teachers out of class, (4) attitude of teacher toward student, and (5) teachers' actions outside the school.

4. In general does your child have too much or too little work in order to "keep up" in his studies?

	(Check one)	83 (Respondents)
	<u>Number of Responses</u>	<u>Per Cent of Respondents</u>
Much too much	3	4
Too much	11	13
About the right amount	66	79
Much too little	0	0
Too little	0	0
I have no opinion	3	4

It was interesting to note that none of the parents thought the students had too little work while fourteen or

17 per cent said that too much work was required. The majority thought that about the right amount was being required.

4. Are there things that your child should be learning right now which are not being taught in his school?

	(Check one)	69 (Respondents)
	<u>Number of Responses</u>	<u>Per Cent of Respondents</u>
No, none	36	52
Yes, many things	5	7
I have no opinion	28	41

If there are things that you think your child should be learning which are not being taught in his school, tell what these things are. _____

The replies to question number five indicates the majority of parents felt that the number of course offerings was satisfactory. When asked to name the things which should be added to the course offerings, the only two not being taught were economics and mechanical drawing.

6. In general, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the school which your child is attending?

	(Check one)	81 (Respondents)
	<u>Number of Responses</u>	<u>Per Cent of Respondents</u>
Very well satisfied	22	27
Satisfied	53	65
About half and half	6	8
Dissatisfied	0	0
Very much dissatisfied	0	0
I have no opinion	0	0

If you have suggestions, please write them here. _____

In response to this question, 92 per cent of the respondents said they were satisfied, or very well satisfied, with the school their child was attending. No one indicated dissatisfaction. When asked to make suggestions for improvement of the school, some of these were: (1) better understanding between child and teacher, (2) teachers should show a more active interest in students, (3) teachers teaching in their minor field, (4) teaching methods could be improved, (5) new faculty members, and (6) transportation home for athletes.

7. Do you know as much about the school as you would like to know?

	(Check one)	⁷⁸ (Respondents)
	<u>Number of Responses</u>	<u>Per Cent of Respondents</u>
Yes	32	41
No	24	31
Uncertain	22	28

The replies to question seven shows that a large number of those answering the questionnaire did not or were uncertain as to whether they knew enough about the school. Consequently, the school should better inform the parents about the school.

8. What is the one thing you like most about your child's school?

46 (Respondents)		
<u>Kinds of Responses</u>	<u>Number of Responses</u>	<u>Per Cent of Respondents</u>
Teachers	10	22
Discipline	6	13
Extra-curricular activities	2	4
School	5	12
Education	7	15
Hot Lunch	2	4
Parent-teacher conferences	2	4
Curriculum	6	13
Administration	4	9
Individual attention	2	4

Over half the parents answering this question listed either the teachers, education, curriculum, or discipline as the thing they liked most about the school.

9. What is the one thing you most dislike about your child's school? _____

33 (Respondents)		
<u>Kinds of Responses</u>	<u>Number of Responses</u>	<u>Per Cent of Respondents</u>
Teachers	9	28
Athletics	10	30
Dances	2	6
Interferences with the school work	4	12
Hot lunches	3	9
School always wants money	2	6
Travel too far for athletics	3	9

Nineteen of thirty-three replies indicated dislikes pertaining to either the attitudes and actions of the teachers or dissatisfaction with the athletic program. Since only thirty-three or 39 per cent of all the parents answered this question, it indicates most of the parents did not have particular dislikes about their child's school.

10. Do you favor the "individual achievement" grade which is on the report card?

	(Check one)	81 (Respondents)
	<u>Number of Responses</u>	<u>Per Cent of Respondents</u>
Yes	67	83
No	3	4
Uncertain	11	13

The conclusion drawn from the results of question ten shows that a very high percentage of the parents were in favor of the individual achievement grade in contrast to the few who were opposed to it.

11. Which, if any, of the following things would you like to see the high school do more about?
(Check all you would like to see more done about)

		84 (Respondents)
	<u>Number of Responses</u>	<u>Per Cent of Respondents</u>
More emphasis on teaching children to get along with others	27	32

	<u>Number of Responses</u>	<u>Per Cent of Respondents</u>
More chances for all children to learn sports and recreational activities	19	23
More attention to the problems of family life	17	20
More attention to the problems of city, state, and national government	17	20
More study of the methods of communications	6	7
More study of how to use money wisely	35	42
More attention to reading	39	46
More attention to mathematics	13	15
More attention to public and social speaking	27	32
More study by the teachers of the abilities, aptitudes, and interests of all children as a basis for helping them choose and prepare for their lifework	60	71
More art education	3	4
More music education	5	6
Other (Tell what) _____	7	8

In question number eleven, the two areas mentioned the greatest number of times were "more attention to reading" and "more study by teachers of the abilities, aptitudes, and interests of all children as a basis for helping them choose and prepare for their lifework." In addition to those items listed, six replies suggested more attention be given the following: (1) leadership, (2) income tax, (3) more explanation of subject matter by teachers, (4) require homemaking

in junior and senior high school, (5) music for students, and (6) study habits.

12. Do you feel that parent-teacher conferences are helpful for all concerned?

	(Check one)	78 (Respondents)
	<u>Number of Responses</u>	<u>Per Cent of Respondents</u>
Always or nearly always	42	54
Usually	29	37
About half the time	6	8
Seldom	1	1
Almost never	0	0

The results of question twelve shows that the parents felt parent-teacher conferences were of some benefit to all concerned. Only one or 1 per cent stated they seldom helped.

13. Do you feel that the P.T.A. programs have been beneficial to you in understanding the school's work?

	(Check one)	74 (Respondents)
	<u>Number of Responses</u>	<u>Per Cent of Respondents</u>
Yes	40	54
No	11	15
Uncertain	23	31

If you say "No", please state the reasons. _____

Since the Parent Teacher Association programs had previously been criticized, it was interesting to note that

the results from question thirteen shows forty or 54 per cent felt the programs were beneficial. Those answering "no" gave the following reasons: (1) not worthwhile, (2) too many speeches, and (3) no connection with school-parent relationship.

14. How often do you attend P.T.A. meetings?

	(Check one)	80 (Respondents)
	<u>Number of Responses</u>	<u>Per Cent of Respondents</u>
Always or nearly always	10	12
Usually	18	23
About half the time	21	26
Almost never	10	13
Seldom	21	26

If you attend less than half the meetings, please state the reasons. _____

Thirty-five per cent of the eighty parents indicated that they attended Parent Teacher Association meetings more than half the time. The thirty-one who said they attended less than half the time, gave these reasons for their absences: (1) illness, (2) no babysitter, (3) have to go alone, (4) conflicting obligations, (5) not worthwhile, and (6) no need for Parent Teacher Association. The conclusion drawn from these replies shows a pronounced negative attitude toward the organization.

15. Do you feel that you are informed enough about the course offerings in school?

78
(Check one) (Respondents)

	<u>Number of Responses</u>	<u>Per Cent of Respondents</u>
Yes	49	63
No	29	37

Forty-nine, or only 63 per cent, of the parents answering question fifteen indicated that they were well informed about the course offerings in the high school. It should be stated that there was also a fairly large number who said that they did not know enough about the course offerings. The writer felt that a higher percentage of the parents should know what courses were offered.

16. Do you feel that you are welcome when you visit school?

78
(Check One) (Respondents)

	<u>Number of Responses</u>	<u>Per Cent of Respondents</u>
Always or nearly always	58	74
Usually	18	23
About half the time	2	3
Seldom	0	0
Almost never	0	0

The results of question sixteen shows that the parents felt welcome when they visited school. It was encouraging that none of the replies expressed the feeling they were not made to feel welcome while visiting school.

17. What suggestions do you have to improve the communications between the home and school? _____

Only twelve parents gave any suggestions for improvement of communications. Some of the suggestions mentioned by more than one were: (1) discussion groups at Parent Teacher Association meetings, (2) more facts presented at parent-teacher conferences, (3) better reporting system of student's progress, and (4) more and better school bulletins.

18. What would you like to know more about in regard to the school? _____

When asked what they would like to know more about in regard to the school, some of the parents mentioned these things: (1) report on students between conferences, (2) college requirements, (3) required subjects in high school, (4) special reading program, (5) how parents can help make a better school, and (6) financial record of activities.

II. EFFORTS TO IMPROVE HOME-SCHOOL RELATIONS

All efforts to improve the home-school relations in the Radcliffe High School were based upon: (1) the review of the literature, (2) the writer's opinion as to the needs of home-school relations in the Radcliffe High School, and (3) the evaluation of the replies from the first questionnaire sent to the parents.

The following information pertains to the work that was undertaken to improve the home-school relations in the Radcliffe High School.

Parent-Teacher Association programs. Since only twenty-eight or 35 per cent of those parents answering the question, "How often do you attend P.T.A. meetings?", attended Parent-Teacher Association meetings more than half the time, the writer made an effort to improve the situation.

The Parent-Teacher Association meets once a month and it includes parents of kindergartners through the twelfth grade. The writer explained to the Parent Teacher Association executive committee the reasons why some high school parents did not attend meetings (question 14).

The writer, along with the executive committee of the Parent-Teacher Association, decided to make certain that every meeting of the Parent-Teacher Association would include educational information for all parents. This was accomplished in two ways: (1) by having guest speakers talk on topics of interest to all parents, and (2) group discussions which pertained to the various grade levels. Having several group discussions during the same meeting date enabled the parents to participate in one according to their needs and interests.

Some of the programs of the Parent-Teacher Association for the year 1961-1962 were as follows:

1. Glen Holmes, from Iowa State University, spoke on the topic, "Parent-School Relationships".

2. Three discussion groups on curriculum--one for elementary, junior high, and senior high school.
3. Three discussion groups on the following topics:
 - (1) reading improvement, (2) college requirements, (the writer sent a copy of "Your Child and College", to each high school parent before this meeting) and (3) transition from elementary to junior high school to high school.

The writer feels that discussions on topics relative to the Radcliffe High School were educational and interesting to both parents and teachers. Also, hearing an expert in public school education was beneficial to both parents and teachers.

Parents' handbook. From the results of the questionnaire, many things were mentioned that could be explained and clarified by a parents' handbook. The writer, therefore, attempted to include in this handbook those aspects of the high school which would be both educational and informative to the parents.

This handbook was sent to the parents of all high

¹National Education Association, Your Child and College (Washington, D.C.: National Education Association, 1962).

school students. It was mailed on January 8, 1962, therefore, many things were left out because some events, activities, and announcements had already preceded.

The handbook included: (1) names and positions of high school faculty, (2) programs of study, (3) credits and units defined, (4) requirements for graduation, (5) grading system, (6) description of courses offered, (7) list and purpose of extra-curricular activities, (8) functions of guidance department, (9) time when teachers are free for consultation, (10) schedule of classes, and (11) calendar of events.

Reading program. Thirty-nine parents indicated more attention should be given to reading (question 11). Also, during parent-teacher conferences, several parents indicated that a remedial reading class would benefit their child. On the basis of the preceding information and the concern of many teachers, a study group was formed to survey the situation. It was found that many students in elementary, junior high, and high school could benefit from a remedial reading program.

Consequently, the reading statistics were presented to the Radcliffe Community School Board and they approved employment of a full-time remedial reading instructor for the school year 1962-63.

The high school has had a Science Research Associates

reading program in operation for a period of five years. It was felt that a remedial reading program would supplement the present Science Research Associates program, and would benefit those students who are retarded two or more years below their grade level.

Teacher cooperation. Many parents indicated in the questionnaire that the teachers should study the abilities, aptitudes, and interests of students as a basis for helping them choose and prepare for their lifework (question 11). Also, the parents stated many other things about the teachers relative to teaching, actions outside the classroom, etc., therefore, the writer did several things in an effort to improve the situation.

First, the writer distributed a booklet entitled, "Parent-Teacher Relationships," to each high school teacher. This booklet has many important things for teachers to remember in regard to their responsibilities as employees of the community.¹

Secondly, the writer organized into booklet form, a summary of various data pertaining to all students, and kept it available for teacher use. The booklet included:

¹Stout and Langdon, op. cit.

(1) name and grade of student, (2) intelligence quotient, (3) diagnostic reading comprehension, (4) individual achievement grade average in high school, (5) academic grade average in high school, and (6) results of Iowa Tests of Educational Development for preceding year. The complete record on each student was also available, but this booklet served as a summary of each student's progress in school. As far as occupational information was concerned, the guidance counselor kept a record of each student's interests and aptitudes.

Thirdly, the results of the questionnaire were distributed to each teacher. It was hoped that these comments from parents would result in a thorough check by the teachers on their individual attitudes and actions toward teaching and education in general. These actions, taken by the writer, were not deemed to be absolutely necessary, but it was felt that a reminder of educational responsibilities is always beneficial to members of the teaching profession.

Orientation program for parents of incoming freshmen.

The fact that many parents had questions pertaining to course offerings, graduation requirements, extra-curricular activities, etc., convinced the writer that an orientation program for parents of incoming freshmen could eliminate misunderstandings of the high school program.

This program was held in the school on April 20, 1962. Approximately 75 per cent of the parents of incoming freshmen were represented.

The program included: (1) introduction of faculty members, (2) distribution of parents' handbook, (3) explanation of school's policies and procedures given by the writer, (4) description of course offerings given by the teachers, (5) the guidance counselor explained the department's function in school, (6) question and answer period, and (7) serving of refreshments.

In addition to giving the parents information pertaining to high school, the meeting served as a means for parents and teachers to get acquainted.

Weekly school bulletin. Seventy-one out of eighty-four responding parents indicated from the questionnaire that they received information about the school from the weekly school bulletin. Therefore, it served as an important communication device for the school administrators.

Since the Radcliffe school had always used the weekly school bulletin as a means of informing parents regarding school matters, it was the writer's purpose to attempt to improve it. The following additions were included in the weekly school bulletin during the school year 1961-62: (1) calendar of school events for the following week, (2) menu

of school lunches for the following week, (3) information regarding school finances, transportation costs, etc., and (4) more detailed information pertaining to school assemblies, parties, extra-curricular activities, etc.

During parent-teacher conferences, the teachers asked the parents if the weekly bulletins were getting home. Most every parent stated that the bulletin did get home and that it served as a good source of school information to them.

Parent-teacher conferences. Radcliffe has had parent-teacher conferences for all grade levels for six years. During this time, approximately 70 to 80 per cent of the high school parents attended these conferences.

Seventy-seven out of the eighty-four parents answering the questionnaire, indicated parent-teacher conferences as a source of information about the school (question 2). Consequently, the writer's purpose was to study and analyze past procedures and try to improve upon them.

These conferences with the parents were scheduled for a period of twenty minutes. Since the time was limited, it was decided to outline a schedule for each teacher to follow at these meetings. The teachers were to discuss with the parents the following topics: (1) results of Iowa Tests of Educational Development, (2) results of diagnostic reading tests, (3) grades from previous year, (4) academic,

individual, and conduct grades, (5) study habits, (6) future plans, (7) possible courses the following year, and (8) general comments and questions about the school. This information was recorded for each student and it will be used as a basis for future parent-teacher conferences.

Student council project. The student council has many functions as a representative body for the students in the Radcliffe High School. Their leadership reflects upon the attitude and actions of the entire student body.

One project of special significance was that of organizing an American Field Service chapter in the Radcliffe Community. The American Field Service is an organization that arranges for student exchanges between countries.

A student council member suggested Radcliffe should have a foreign student; consequently, plans were made to discuss the topic with the student body and various organizations in the community. The city newspaper asked for opinions on the idea of a foreign student in Radcliffe and the replies were very favorable.

Upon gaining support on the proposal, the writer and members of the council called a meeting to organize an American Field Service chapter in Radcliffe.

The chapter was organized and approved by the American Field Service. The necessary six hundred dollars was raised

to finance a foreign student to this country and the family selection was completed. Over one hundred parents and organizations contributed toward the support of this project.

Radcliffe will have a girl from Australia in the senior class for the school year 1962-63. She will be graduated from Radcliffe High School in the spring of 1963 and return to Australia.

The writer feels that this one project of the student council has helped to foster better understanding and co-operation between the home and school. Parents, students, and teachers are looking forward to the experiences which will result from the relationship with a foreign student.

III. RESULTS OF SECOND QUESTIONNAIRE

The purpose of the second questionnaire was to obtain the parents' opinion on efforts made to improve the home-school relations in the Radcliffe High School.

The questions, along with the results of "yes" and "no" answers, is as follows, including a summarization pertaining to the results and comments of each individual question used in the questionnaire sent to one hundred forty high school parents:

- 1.. Do you feel that the weekly school bulletins have been improved upon this year?

	41 (Respondents)	
	<u>Number of Responses</u>	<u>Per Cent of Respondents</u>
Yes	38	93
No	3	7
Reasons for answer _____		

Thirty-eight of the forty-one responding parents felt the weekly bulletins had been improved upon during the 1961-62 school year. The reasons given for feeling improvements had been made were: (1) more informative, (2) enjoy facts about school, (3) easy to read, (4) very thorough, and (5) the calendar of events. Only three parents indicated the bulletins had not been improved, and their reasons were: (1) no different than before, and (2) don't receive them.

2. Do you feel that the Parents' Handbook has been helpful to you?

	42 (Respondents)	
	<u>Number of Responses</u>	<u>Per Cent of Respondents</u>
Yes	40	95
No	2	5
Reasons for answer _____		

In response to the usefulness of the Parents' Handbook, forty, or 95 per cent, of the forty-two responding parents felt that it had been helpful to them. The greatest number

of parents mentioned the following reasons for feeling that the handbook had been helpful: (1) informative, (2) helps in planning for future, (3) information on curriculum, (4) rules and regulations defined, (5) required and elective courses defined, and (6) information on calendar of events. The two parents replying "no" to this question said the handbook wasn't detailed enough.

3. Do you feel that the P.T.A. programs have been improved upon this year?

		29 (Respondents)
	<u>Number of Responses</u>	<u>Per Cent of Respondents</u>
Yes	22	76
No	7	24

Reasons for answer _____

Question number three shows that twenty-two of the twenty-nine parents answering felt improvement had been made in the Parent-Teacher Association programs. Since only twenty-nine parents answered this question, it must be assumed that the remaining thirteen respondents attended very seldom or never. The reasons given for "yes" answers to this question were: (1) informative, (2) enjoyed guest speakers, (3) more interesting, and (4) enjoyed panel discussions. Those answering "no" to whether or not improvements had been made in the Parent-Teacher Association programs

said they hadn't attended the meetings or the meetings were dull.

4. Do you feel that a foreign student in our school will help our community, school, and students?

36
(Respondents)

Reasons for answer _____

Thirty-one or 86 per cent of the parents who answered felt that a foreign student would benefit the community, parents, and students. The majority of parents were of the opinion that a foreign student in the Radcliffe High School would promote a better relationship between our country and foreign countries. The only reason given for answering "no" to this question was that "charity begins at home".

5. Have you received any useful knowledge from the pamphlet entitled "Your Child and College"?

35
(Respondents)

	<u>Number of Responses</u>	<u>Per Cent of Respondents</u>
Yes	26	74
No	9	26

Reasons for answer _____

Of the thirty-five responses to question number five, twenty-six parents indicated that they received some useful knowledge from the pamphlet entitled, "Your Child and College."

The reasons given were: (1) useful information for college, (2) parents can advise children about college, and (3) states issues clearly. Those parents who said they did not receive any useful knowledge from the pamphlet, either did not receive one or never read it.

6. In general, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the school which your child is attending?

		42 (Respondents)
	<u>Number of Responses</u>	<u>Per Cent of Respondents</u>
Very well satisfied	13	31
Satisfied	23	55
About half and half	6	14
Dissatisfied	0	0
Very much dissatisfied	0	0
I have no opinion	0	0

Reasons for answer _____

In response to question number six, thirty-six, or 86 per cent of the responding parents were very well satisfied, or satisfied with the school. Only six or 14 per cent of the parents were satisfied about half the time. The reasons given for satisfaction with the school were: (1) good teachers, (2) good curriculum, and (3) good discipline. Those parents who indicated dissatisfaction with the school their child was attending, stated that the school had poor

teachers and too many activities.

7. Do you feel that improvements have been made in the communications between the home and school this year?

	39 (Respondents)	
	<u>Number of Responses</u>	<u>Per Cent of Respondents</u>
Yes	37	95
No	2	5

Reasons for answer _____

Thirty-seven or 95 per cent of the parents answering felt improvements had been made in the communications between the home and school during the school year 1961-62. It was interesting to note that only two parents answered "no" to this question. The greatest number of parents listed the following reasons for stating that improvements had been made in the communications between the home and school: (1) better informed on school matters, (2) panel discussions at Parent-Teacher Association programs, (3) effort made by school, (4) questionnaires, and (5) weekly bulletins.

8. We will appreciate any suggestions you have on ways to improve home-school relations in the Radcliffe Community School. _____

The suggestions mentioned in response to question eight were many, but only one suggestion was mentioned by

more than one parent. Five parents stated there should be a better balance between "the amount of work assigned" and "study time available" in school.

IV. EVALUATION OF EFFORTS TO IMPROVE HOME-SCHOOL RELATIONS

The replies from parents indicated that improvements had been made in the home-school relations during the 1961-1962 school year. A very high percentage of the respondents indicated improvements had been made in the following areas of home-school relations: (1) written communications between home and school, (2) school publications, and (3) group meetings.

The parents' reply to the statement, "We will appreciate any suggestions you have on ways to improve home-school relations in the Radcliffe Community High School," were mainly comments of a general nature. Five parents did suggest there should be a better balance between the amount of work assigned and the time available for study in school. All of the other comments were important, but there was no concentrated dissatisfaction by the parents in any given area. This indicated an over-all satisfaction in home-school relations.

Because of the low percentage of return on the second

questionnaire, other factors were included in this evaluation. It might be presumed that the non-respondents were either relatively satisfied or their dissatisfactions were vague and they were not particularly interested in stating their feelings.

Informal comments heard from parents, teachers, and students were also considered in this evaluation. Many parents and teachers commented very favorably about: (1) The Parent-Teacher Association meetings during the 1961-62 school year, (2) a foreign student in the high school, (3) the Parents' Handbook, and (4) the orientation program for parents of incoming freshmen.

From the information available, all indications were that the efforts to improve the home-school relations in the Radcliffe High School were very successful.

CHAPTER V

I. SUMMARY

In an effort to improve the home-school relations in the Radcliffe Community High School, the writer involved the parents, school staff, and students in the study.

To determine the areas of home-school relations that needed improvement, the parents were asked to express their opinions about various school practices and procedures. All of the parents of high school students were sent a questionnaire. Eighty-four parents returned the questionnaire, a 60 per cent return.

The results of the first questionnaire sent to the parents indicated that the following phases of home-school relations needed improvement: (1) more general information regarding the high school, (2) more information about course offerings in high school, (3) better Parent-Teacher Association programs, (4) more study by the teachers of the abilities aptitudes, and interests of the students, and (5) more attention to reading.

Based upon results of the questionnaire and combined judgments of the writer and the local superintendent, efforts were made to improve the home-school relations through the following means: (1) Parents' Handbook, (2)

employing a remedial reading instructor, (3) study of Parent-Teacher Association, (4) weekly school bulletin, (5) foreign exchange student, (6) parent-teacher conferences, (7) orientation program for parents of incoming freshmen, and (8) teacher cooperation.

In order to evaluate the efforts made to improve the home-school relations program, the writer sent a second questionnaire to all the parents. Forty-two parents returned the questionnaire, a 30 per cent return.

The results of the second questionnaire indicated that a very high percentage of the responding parents felt improvement had been made in the home-school relations of the Radcliffe Community High School.

II. CONCLUSIONS

On the basis of the data obtained in this study, the writer feels the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. A majority of the parents are satisfied with the job the school is doing.
2. Students are treated fairly by the teachers and other school officials.
3. Parents feel that the students have about the right amount of work to do in order to "keep up" with their subjects.

4. Parents feel that the school is teaching the proper courses.
5. The Parents' Handbook has been helpful to the parents.
6. The weekly school bulletin has been improved upon during the past year.
7. The Parent-Teacher Association programs have been improved upon during the past year.
8. The pamphlet entitled, "Your Child and College," was favorably received by many parents.
9. The remedial reading program should help the overall educational program of the school.
10. The foreign exchange student should help create more interest in the school.
11. Parent-teacher conferences serve as a major source of information to the parents about the school.
12. Parents of incoming freshmen should be better informed about the organization and operations of the high school as a result of the orientation program.
13. Evidence indicates communications between the home and school have been improved upon during the past year.
14. The Radcliffe High School teachers are concerned about effective home-school relations.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of this study indicate that the majority of parents of high school students attending the Radcliffe High School are satisfied with the home-school relations. Also, the school staff seems to feel that their relations with the home have been strengthened.

As in most schools, there are opportunities for improvement. The area of home-school relations must be considered continuously and changes made to improve the educational program of the school.

On the basis of the evidence presented in this study, the following recommendations are made for future home-school relations programs in the Radcliffe Community High School.

First, the Parents' Handbook should be published and sent to the parents in the fall of the year. This handbook can serve as an excellent source of information to the parents. Some of the additions recommended for the handbook are as follows: (1) list of student expenses; (2) explanation regarding excused and unexcused absences, (3) purpose of make-up slip and penalty for it being late, and (4) hot lunch program.

Secondly, the school staff should be made constantly aware of their responsibilities as home-school relations

ambassadors. The high school principal perhaps can accomplish this through a faculty meeting or study group.

Thirdly, the parents appreciated the pamphlet entitled, "Your Child and College," therefore, the writer recommends more published materials be sent home. The National Education Association has numerous pamphlets on educational topics. These pamphlets are not expensive and they are easy to read.

Fourth, the writer recommends that the Parent-Teacher Association of Radcliffe have a "back-to-school night" for the parents. The parents would go through the same daily schedule as their child. This could help to create more interest in the school and the Parent-Teacher Association. Presently, there are too few parents who attend the Parent-Teacher Association meetings.

Fifth, since the newspaper, parent-teacher conferences, and weekly school bulletins, serve as the three main sources of information to the parents about the school, they should be utilized to the utmost. Through these avenues, many important school messages will reach the home.

Sixth, the writer recommends that the various school organizations take a more active part in showing their accomplishments to the community. Some of these organizations are: (1) Future Homemakers of America, (2) camera club, (3) Future Farmers of America, (4) Future Teachers of America,

(5) National Honor Society, and (6) student council.

Finally, the writer recommends that the high school principal study and make changes in the home-school relations program each year.

In conclusion, the writer believes that this study has helped to establish a better understanding between the home and school. Through this understanding, it is hoped that the student will benefit.

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